



# INTERNATIONAL NEWS

MONTHLY ORGAN of the INTERNATIONAL CONTACT COMMISSION

Vol. 8 - No. 8.

MAY 1947

10 Cents

## CONTENTS

THE RUSSIAN QUESTION HUGO OEHLER

ROAD TO THE PARTY M. REESE

THIS MAN WALLACE C. B. COWAN

## INTERNATIONAL NOTES

Issued by THE REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS LEAGUE, U. S. A.  
for the  
INTERNATIONAL CONTACT COMMISSION

PUBLISHERS MAIL ADDRESS: **DEMOS PRESS**

POST OFFICE BOX NO. 6471 CLEVELAND -1- OHIO, U. S. A.

ALL LABOR DONATED







# Henry A. Wallace

## LEFT HAND OF U.S. IMPERIALISM

by C. B. Cowan

**A**fter a period of silence the voice of Henry Wallace is again heard throughout the land. His speeches in Europe and the U. S. A. have been given wide circulation and extensive comment. He has conjured up the wrath of the Taft-Bricker reactionaries in the Eightieth Congress to the point where public demands have been made for his prosecution as a traitor and seditionist. The international financiers and the National Association of Manufacturers are howling for his scalp. President Truman and the Southern reactionaries of the Democratic Party kicked him out of the Secretaryship of the Commerce Department. Franklin D. Roosevelt abandoned Wallace, in favor of Harry S. Truman, for the vice-presidency in 1944. Yet the Wallace campaign is gaining ever wider popularity and support.

In the Wallace camp are found the die-hard New Dealers headed by Elliot Roosevelt, the Liberals and "Intellectuals", publications such as **'LOOK'**, **'NEW REPUBLIC'**, **'NATION'**, **'NEW MASSES'** and the newspaper **'PM'**. Also supporting the Wallace campaign are many less widely known publications. The American Consumer Cooperative Associations, various farm organizations are Wallace 'boosters', and not to be overlooked are the various Progressive, Liberal and "Left" groups including the PAC, American Labor Party, Progressive Citizens' Committees, Farmer-Labor Party and last, but not least, the uninvited guest - the Communist (Stalinist) Party and its captive organizations. Even the Independent Labor Partyites are headed objectively into the crystalizing coalition of the Wallace camp.

On the international scene Henry Wallace's policies enjoy the open support of the Soviet government and its puppet regimes in Eastern Europe and the Orient. Braving the wrath of the U.S. capitalists and their present government the semi-official and official state agencies in England, France as well as other parts of Europe gave support and comfort to the Wallace crusade. What, then, is behind the Wallace boom and of what significance and importance is the Wallace matter to the interests and welfare of the working class?

It would be folly, in answering the above question, to dismiss Wallace as a more or less capable crack-pot who is able to hold an audience by means of his eloquence and the naivete and simplicity of his "ideals." Wallace is much more than that. He is a symbol of the need of the Bourgeoisie, in this period, to prepare an effective sponge to sop up the growing radicalization of the masses in this largely disillusioned post-war world. A rapidly mounting determination in the U.S. and throughout the world to "do something" about the war-breeding, hate-mongering and open, blustering imperialist domination of the "Truman Doctrine" and its shameless supporters - the capitalistic 'Labor (?)' government of Britain and the left-opportunist world-regime of counter-revolutionary Stalinism - which could get out of hand and into revolutionary channels. Anticipating this (to them) highly unwanted possibility the whole camp of capitalism's left coverage is very busy grooming Wallace for the presidency in 1948. They are parading Wallace in front of those hardest hit by capitalist post-war policies - the working class, the small scale farmers, small business people and the professionals. In the period between now and the 1948 elections Wallace is very useful to the capitalists as a safety valve - providing a "safe" escape for an already considerably accumulated resentment against both the foreign and domestic policies of Truman, Taft & Co. Let us see if we can substantiate these charges.

More than a decade past Henry Wallace wrote: "In the economic world it is inevitable that more and more emphasis

is going to be laid on the idea of co-operation as distinguished from free competition. The only way in which democracy can survive the logical onslaught of the dictator-state aspect of Communism and Fascism is to develop the genuine co-operative ideal to the limit." (Whose Constitution - 1936.) In his speech this month at Los Angeles Wallace said: "If I fail to cry out that I am anti-Communist, it is not because I am friendly to Communism, but because at this time of growing intolerance I refuse to join even the outer circle of that band of men who stir the steaming cauldron of hatred and fear." In these two statements, as in many others, Mr. Wallace clearly sets forth his opposition to Communism. In the first quotation above appears the rejection of old line "free competitive" or laissez faire capitalism as well as Communism and a projection of the "ideal" of co-operative capitalism. This position is again emphasized in this written statement by Wallace: "I have said that the co-operative philosophy is the vital idea of the twentieth century that is bound to translate itself in time to the hard facts of social mechanism and reality." (Ibid.)

Herein lies the whole meat of the "Wallace Doctrine." Hating and fearing the power and intent of the organized masses acting under revolutionary ideology Mr. Wallace looks for some effective means, other than naked (Fascistic) force, which will stop the working class revolution. He is astute enough to realize that the old, traditional methods of capitalism will no longer suffice in this period of capitalist decay and deep crises. He looks for new methods of preserving and expanding American capitalism. No matter how often or how emphatically Henry Wallace may howl for "One World" he cannot, from time to time, avoid revealing his real intentions. As early as 1935 Mr. Wallace wrote: "For my own part I believe that the United States is now sufficiently mature in her economic and political experience so that she will increasingly serve as the source of spiritual, philosophic and political ideas which will furnish motive power not only for our own future, but for the entire world." There could hardly be a clearer stated intent or determination to support world domination by U.S. imperialism. When, therefore, Wallace speaks of "One World" he means one world under the heel of U.S. imperialist capitalism cloaked under the fiction of "democratic, co-operative ideals."

In his Seattle speech of May 24 Mr. Wallace attacked the so-called Truman doctrine correctly on the grounds that it would set up hostile spheres of influence. No matter that the charge is true. It in no way hides the fact that the "Wallace Doctrine" thinly veils the same character. Proof of this can be found in Mr. Wallace's foreign policy set forth in his speech of September, 1946, in which he said: "On our part we should recognize that we have no more business in the political affairs of Eastern Europe than Russia has in the political affairs of Latin America, Western Europe and the United States." Here, surely, is a most open bid to divide the world into two parts with the Soviet Union on one part and the U.S. on the other with a "democratic and co-operative" agreement to each stay in his own allotted area and keep their snouts out of each others worlds. One world indeed!

Just what becomes of the much-lauded "sovereign rights of small nations and free peoples" of the Wallace Doctrine if the above Wallace condition for co-operative peace is brought about? What of the United Kingdom and the many small nations on the continent of Europe? What of China, India and the smaller nations of Asia? Are they to be divided up among the U.S. and the Soviet Union in order to try for "peace in our time?" Apparently this is the plan of Wallace and his friends

because he, and they, in many speeches and documents have so indicated. For instance - in the Seattle speech mentioned previously Wallace said: "The Truman Doctrine will set up two empires - - - and **DRIVE BRITAIN INTO THE SOVIET CAMP.**" (*emphasis ours* - Ed.) Whenever Wallace has had occasion to discuss the Orient he has made similar statements in regard to China, India, Korea, etc. Always the question: "Into whose camp?" Truly the demagogue can no more hide his desire to set up a two world situation, with the U.S. fighting for supremacy, than can the more open and direct advocates of identical ultimate ends. — Such advocates being publically led by the Truman-Taft-Stassen-Vandenberg Dewey gang of Labor-hating, open reactionaries. The Truman Doctrine and Wallace Doctrine differ only in method and timing.

The Liberals who are flocking to support the Wallace gang are as confused as usual. They are lending themselves to the task of influencing the trend to the "democratic", People's Frontist coalition of deadly opportunism. These people from the arts, sciences and professions shout loudly, in concert, about One World of democratic co-operation as a safeguard to peace and as a base for universal security and prosperity. But we will look at the real content of their position in contrast to their good wishes and good intentions.

Mr. Wallace has often stated that the second world war was fought by the U.S. for its **national survival**. This position has the public and official endorsement of these Liberals as well as the politically active remnants of the New Deal who, incidentally, do not seem to realize that their departed chief would not go along with them today. They appear not to understand that the need for the old "democratic" demogogy of a war period is past and a "new" policy is needed in order to, post war, realize the ultimate aims of the New Deal. Not even Roosevelts rejection of the Wallace doctrine in favor of the Truman doctrine at the Chicago convention of the Democratic Party in 1944 seems to teach these people that the New Deal demogogy of the pre-war and war periods is abandoned in this post-war situation. The Wallace view is, however, that the U.S. entered the war to protect and ensure the "national survival" of the U.S. Wallace's Conference of Progressives, at their September, 1946, conference formally adopted this position in point 2 of their Statement of Objectives. What, then, among the characteristics of their beloved world wide U.S. "nationalism" are Wallace and the camp of his Liberal-Labor-Stalinist supporters willing to sacrifice in order to establish their "One World?"

Let us suppose that a United Nations Government of the World should be set up. Let us suppose that the preamble of the Charter of the United Nations, with its applaudable humanitarian generalities to which we can all subscribe, should be placed upon the working agenda today for material implementation. What form would it take? Would this world government be a federation of sovereign national states joined after the manner of the 48 states of the U.S.? On what basis, then, would world authority be established? Through what practical machinery would such authority function? Would representation by the nations be on a population basis as representation is now given in the U.S. House of Representatives? Would national elections be held without interference from any outside power or powers? Would the franchise rights of national minorities be protected as the Negro's is not in Wallace's "democratic" U.S. which he insists is mature enough to dominate the entire world in the "spiritual, philosophic and political" spheres? We are convinced that the heterogeneous Wallace Boosters will try every trick of sophistry and demogogy evading the task of finding truly democratic answers to the above questions.

Just what would the Wallace-for-President crowd do about their dearly beloved U.S. national survival, — the U.S. of course "leading" the world philosophically, spiritually and politically, — if their feeble requests for a free, democratic and sovereign China and India were to be realized within the framework of a world government whose powers derived from representation by population? It is high time for Henry Wallace, Mr. Ickes, Elliot Roosevelt, Phil Murray, Sen. Claude Pepper, Jack Kroll and Wm. Z. Foster to make their positions on the

above questions unequivocally clear.

One of our claims is that the Wallace-for-President campaign and the Wallace Doctrine have the active support of the left wing of Truman's Democratic Party, the Political Action Committee, American Labor Party, Progressive Citizens' Committees, American Consumers Co-operative Association, farmers organizations, the Communist (Stalinist) Party, Congress of Industrial Organizations as well as a long list of Bourgeois and petty-Bourgeois Liberal organizations. Ample proof of this contention can be found in the recent and current publications of all the organizations listed above. For some exceptionally enlightening proof, however, the reader should refer to the Elliot Roosevelt-Joseph Stalin interview reported in the February 4, 1947, issue of **LOOK** magazine and the **PROGRAM** adopted by the Conference of Progressives at Chicago, Illinois, on September 28-29, 1946.

In the **LOOK** article Stalin, as usual, tosses all Marxist-Leninist principles to the winds and gives assurance to the E. Roosevelt - H. Wallace gang of left Bourgeois-Democrats that they and their program will have Communist Parties' full support everywhere. In the **PROGRAM** of the Progressives among its 300, or more, signers are found the names of many leading officials from every organization listed herein. No one could read in the Wallaceite **PROGRAM** of this mongrel Conference that: "Spheres of special influence of Great Powers exist. It is useless to deny it. We urge that it be respected." and fail to see capitalist imperialism behind the Wallace mask.

The Revolutionary Workers League rejects the Wallace trend. We brand it for what it is — the American version of the Stalinist supported "Peoples Front" or "Left" coalition politics. We make a distinction in form only between the broader coverage of the class-collaborationist Wallace camp and the Trotskyist "Independent" Labor Party program which fundamentally has its decisive base in the same principles as the Wallace line.

To Marxists there can be no peace under capitalism — not even in the past progressive period when the inherent contradictions of the capitalist system were not as frequently, or deeply, aggravated as they are in this, its period of decay. As Marxists we also reject, as Lenin and the Bolsheviks before us, the betraying theory that there can be a "peaceful" transition from capitalism to the Socialist, and ultimately, Communist Society.

As Marxists we know that Fascism and "Democracy" as well as Peoples Front Governments and "Labor" governments (Look at Britain.) are but **POLITICAL** instruments of the capitalist system. We know that the Wallace formula of the co-operative idea is but a new political mask prepared for the worlds working masses and colonial peoples to hide, if possible, the same old capitalist content of contemporary society which, if permitted to live, will give us ever greater hunger, fear and suffering and always bigger and better world wars — with atom bombs.

Against the crystalizing Wallace camp and its illegitimate offspring the "Independent Labor Partyites" we pose the building of the Revolutionary Marxist Parties in the nations and their federation in a new Marxist International for the purpose of ending hunger, fear and war by destroying its cause, the capitalist system.

The tempo and dynamic of capitalist decay, nationally and world wide, gives rise to the urgency of time. Independent working class action for the revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist system, in any and all of its political expressions, is the crying practical need of the hour. There is no time to waste in futile efforts at reforming the basic cause of war and uttering pious cries against the material expressions of the germ we thus cultivate. We urge acceleration of recruitment into the ranks of the Marxists and the International Unity of the Marxist revolutionary camp. The RWL and the International Contact Commission are working day and night to that end. We ask for the fullest co-operation of all class conscious workers and Marxists everywhere in this task of taking the **ONLY** steps which can or will achieve "peace and plenty in our time."



# THE RUSSIAN QUESTION

HUGO OEHLE

1 - Since the October Revolution the Russian Question has been, and still remains, the key question for every revolutionary Marxian party in every country on the road to power. Periodically revisionists crop up who claim that now the Russian question has been relegated to the background and the revolution in this or that country takes precedent. From the practical standpoint of the class struggle the revolution within a given country and the class problems within the nation always come first. But from the standpoint of theory and the road to power the Russian Question will remain the key question until social revolution succeeds in another important country under revolutionary Marxian leadership.

2 - Upon this international premise the convention of the League again takes up the Russian question to consider the events since the second world war and see where the objective events have bearing upon our basic premise. Toward this end we reaffirm our previous adopted positions of the INTERNATIONAL CONTACT COMMISSION and of the REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS LEAGUE documents dealing with the Russian question. Events have confirmed our position and now enables us to further elaborate our concepts.

3 - The new upsurge of the propaganda and talk of war against the Soviet Union on the basis of the Greek situation again brings to the fore the fundamental international relations and revolutionary perspectives. About a year ago there was a campaign and talk about a third world war around the corner. Some people in high places considered the war a matter of months. Now we have a similar campaign. In both cases it was the work of the reactionary leading imperialists who then and now are unable to swing the majority and the masses into action against the Soviet Union. A year ago we pointed out there would be no war at once.

## THE COMING CONFLICT

Again we point out that there is no danger of an immediate third world war. Then and now we state that it is wrong to speak of a third world war. This phrase is an attempt to cover up the real struggle going on. A third world war means a similar follow up of the first and second war. And this can only mean an imperialist war. The first world war was an imperialist war. The second world war was primarily an imperialist war, and secondary, to the degree of invasion and struggle of the Soviet Union a revolutionary war. The coming conflict being propagandized by Churchill and the American reactionaries can have nothing in common with the previous kinds of wars. The war these imperialists are talking about is a war of invasion against the Soviet Union. They want to carry through what Hitler failed to accomplish. They could not afford to allow Hitler to accomplish this task. To do so would mean to allow Hitler to be the strongest imperialist who could then use his Euro-Asia land empire and conquer the world.

With Hitler out of the way; but with Stalin moving toward the consolidation of this Euro-Asia land nation, the far sighted reactionaries want to invade and conquer the Soviet Union before it is too late.

When we speak of the coming war (not to mention the smaller capitalist wars that may and will arise) we are not speaking of a coming imperialist war; we are speaking of an imperialist struggle against the extension of the October Revolution and the Soviet Union.

However, the majority of leading capitalists at present are of a different opinion. They agree with the perspective of the invasion of the Soviet Union but disagree as to the time element. They understand that the problem of a more stable economic equilibrium of world capitalism, and a rest period from the second world war is needed before the all-out offensive against the Soviet Union is undertaken. The decay forces of capitalism are so great that they still give the Soviet Union room to maneuver and a temporary breathing spell.

4 - The so-called Greek crisis reveals this war pattern to the fullest extent. Greece is again in revolutionary upheaval, and like Spain it is the testing ground for the different great powers. The Stalinists have better advantages in Greece than they had in Spain. Not only is it a matter of geography; but more important fascism has had some severe setbacks even though fascism has not been decisively defeated. The Fascists government propped up by England will now be utilized by American imperialism to protect decaying capitalism against the extension of the October Revolution; to help England; to protect the Near East; and to protect American investments in the Near East.

The United States is just beginning its new phase of intervention against the October Revolution and the Soviet Union. In the Near East alone this will have to be extended from Greece and Turkey to Palestine, to Suez, to Iraq, to Arabia and very soon to Italy.

The aim of the Anglo-American imperialists in Greece and Turkey is primarily to hold in check the social revolution and with this, to also hold in check the Soviet Union. But the capitalist fear a victorious revolution led by Marxists a thousand times more than they fear the victory of Stalinism in establishing a new puppet government for border defense and for the defense of socialism in one country.

#### U.S..IMPERIALISM FALLS HEIR TO DECAY

5 - The Greek crisis has brought to the fore in bolder relief the disintegration of the British Empire. The Marxists started pointing out the decline of the British Empire with the 1926 British General Strike. All the basic factors at work now in the Empire were present then. The Marxists further pointed out that the end of the second world war would see the beginning of the end of the British Empire no matter who "won" the war. This the RWL explained in 1939, when United States, the Soviet Union, Japan, and Italy had not yet entered the conflict.



Now at long last the "brilliant" high paid propagandists of the exploiters have discovered that the British Empire is falling apart. It has alarmed the conservative capitalist throughout the world. This is part of the reasoning behind the hysterical campaign against the Soviet Union.

6 - United States intervenes in Greece and helps Turkey in the name of checking the spread of communism. The American imperialists are forced to not only prop up every reactionary and fascist government against the social revolution; but they must also help save the British Empire. The vacuum its final sinking would leave, is too much for even the American strength to take over.

The United States came out of the second world war as the leading victor with world power second to none. But the United States did not inherit the same kind of a world that England did when London became the leading world's capital. England obtained an expanding, developing capitalist system with great colonial possibilities. United States comes to full growth when the Soviet Union is already the second leading power; when Fascists Greek relief merely means America's main preoccupation will be the struggle to smash the rising social revolutions in Europe, in Asia and throughout the world. The Soviet Union, in spite of Stalinism stands as a giant in the path of this American aim. Starvation and revolution confront American imperialism throughout the world.

The victory of the first and second world war cannot be realized by American imperialism in super profits, in colonial exploitation, in world domination and wealth to go with it. The victories leaves the United States capitalist to squander their gigantic internal productive wealth in the quick-sands of decay capitalism and its effects--social revolutions in its wake.

7 - One thing must not be lost sight of in this struggle on a world scale between dying capitalism and rising communism; between fascism and the social revolution; between the Anglo-American imperialist and the Soviet Union; and that is the fact that the second world war has settled none of the decisive problems confronting either decaying capitalism or the Soviet Union under Stalinism.

#### CAPITALIST DECAY ACCELERATED

Fascism has not been defeated. Only a social revolution can defeat fascism.

Capitalist decay has not been arrested; on the contrary it has been accelerated with some of the contending imperialist reduced to second rate powers.

The basic antagonisms confronting the Soviet Union under Stalinism have not been solved.

The only decisive change brought about by the second world war was the realignment of the world powers with the United States as the first power and the Soviet Union as the second power. This change in itself cannot solve the contradictions confronting either side, either capitalism or communism. It only changed the relation of forces for a new and bigger struggle for a showdown between decaying capitalism and the social revolution.

8 - The Soviet Union has the added point of advantage, as compared to her previous position before 1939 by the fact that she is the strongest military power in Europe and in Asia; and that the Soviet Union has the most effective land power base in the world. Her weakness is the fact that she has not consolidated this land power. This is not only due to the lack of time since the war; it is primarily due to the non-marxist false theoretical premises enveloping all her military and political, etc., moves; a false theory based upon the concept of the building of social in one country instead of the revolution in permanence.

Another advantage that the Soviet has and the Stalinist exploit to the fullest extent is the difference in the standard of living on a world scale. Generally speaking the standard of living in the Soviet Union cannot compare with the highest capitalist developed nations; but the standard of living in the Soviet Union can compare favorably with the standard of living in Asia, in Africa and in other backward countries throughout the world. The capitalist of the United States and several other developed capitalist nations may be able to exploit this difference in the standard of living; but in the backward sections of the earth, which is inhabited by the majority of mankind this argument is not so effective. And neither is it very effective in Europe and other places where want, hunger and starvation meets one at every turn.

On the negative side of the ledger we find that the ending of the war, although leaving the Soviet Union, as the second world power has at the same time accelerated the contradictions confronting the Soviet Union. The strength of the Soviet Union, as the second power is not a process of surpassing the other powers; rather it has been a process of the other powers DECLINING due to capitalist decay. This strength, therefore, in the light of these factual world forces has its weak side.

#### STALINIST CONTRADICTIONS INCREASE

The antagonisms between decaying world capitalism and transition economy toward socialist contraction has been intensified.

The antagonisms between socialism in one country and the need for world revolution (social revolutions) has been increased.

The antagonisms between the standard of living of the Stalinist bureaucrats and the workers of the Soviet Union have been increased.



The antagonisms between consumers goods for the masses and the Stalinists haste to construct more means of production against the danger of capitalist intervention has developed to further heights.

The antagonisms between the bureaucrat's dictatorship and the workers democracy (democratic centralism) moves forward with leaps and bounds.

In spite of these negative factors the economy of the Soviet Union will reveal growth; while world capitalist economy will reveal further decay, even though revival and small cycles of prosperity for the exploiters, but not for the masses will be revealed in the major capitalist nations. But this by itself will not be decisive.. Decay capitalism with all of its contradiction and antagonisms is still stronger than rising transition economy under Stalism.

The only factor that can alter this relation of forces IS A SUCCESSFUL SOCIAL REVOLUTION LED BY MARXISTS IN ONE OR MORE ADVANCED COUNTRIES. Just like this is the only factor that can decisively defeat fascism and turn the tide the other way.

#### FASCISM VS. COMMUNISM

9 - In Europe where the battle line of fascism and communism is taking new forms and new shapes with the special maneuvers of the Anglo-American bloc against the Stalinists the struggle is again shaping up, in each country, although at different levels of development and at different tempos.

Each nation in Europe has already spent part of its dynamics in the steps from right (fascists) to left (Stalinist-Socialist) and are now moving back toward the right in some countries. The problem can be posed theoretically as follows: That if the social revolution is not successful in these given countries when revolution is ripe then the only alternative for the Anglo-American bloc to hold the masses down from new upsurges by some form of naked dictatorship or fascism. To simplify matters, but to remain exact; Europe has the alternative of the social revolution (not Stalism), that is, communism or fascism.

And as we have said so many times, the greatest stumbling bloc in the path of the proletarian revolution is the Stalinist control of the Soviet Union and their stooge parties in these countries. Next to them, of course, is the parties of the second international.

In the critical pre-revolutionary period of these countries we will again witness the revival of the treacherous, non-Marxists policy of the Trotskyites of the liquidationists policy into the second international. This error is only one of the many basic principle errors of Trotskyism in relation to the social revolution and the Soviet Union.

## MARXISTS DEFEND THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION

10 - In our policy for the defense of the Soviet Union and the political revolution against Stalinism we must never lose sight of our main line of march. We must not confuse the defense with the question of defeat of the Soviet Union as the Shachtmanites and others do. While we are for the defense of the Soviet Union we are against Stalinism at all times. At no time can Stalinism play a progressive role; even though the Soviet Union remains a progressive force in world wide capitalist decay.

When revolutionary Marxists speak of the necessity at given times of fighting the Red Army we do so within the framework of a definite policy. The struggle against the Red Army or the Soviet Union in addition to Stalinism, takes place only under the following conditions:

- 1 - Inside the Soviet Union when the situation is ripe for a political revolution and there is a division of forces within the Red Army and some sections remain loyal to Stalinism, etc.
- 2 - In capitalist nations when the situation is ripe for a social revolution and the workers are struggling toward state power and Stalinism uses Red Army forces in an attempt to smash the proletariat seizure of power.

This is the line of demarcation between defense and defeat in relation to the Soviet Union. Each concrete problem can be worked out upon this premise. And upon this premise we remain defensists of the Soviet Union; while we call for the political revolution against Stalinism in the Soviet Union.



# THE ROAD TO THE PARTY OF REVOLUTIONARY MARXISM

1. - The conclusion of the second imperialist war of capitalism in decay opens a new period for the proletariat and the revolutionary Marxists. The gigantic upheavals of the proletarian and colonial masses during the course of the war and its closing phase, shows once again that the key to our epoch of wars and revolutions is the struggle for the building of the Marxian Party and International. Without the party, over the head of the party, or against the party, successful workers revolution is impossible.

2 - The first imperialist war and the October Revolution, marking the decisive entry of world capitalism into its decay stage, marked thereby also a new stage in the development of the proletarian party. From a party working on a perspective of gradual growth and increase, through educational, propaganda, trade union, and parliamentary methods, the part of the proletariat faced new tasks, the necessity of waging decisive class battles against bourgeois reaction in all forms, and for the overthrow of the exploiters and their state, and the full assumption of state power as the vanguard of all the exploited. This did not negate the necessity to engage in all previous methods, propaganda, parliamentary, etc., as ultra lefts imagined. The new tasks flowed from the change of "gradually developing" capitalism to a stage of convulsions in the class struggle, revolutions, wars, temporary periods of "stabilization", etc. Thereby the question of strategy and tactics assumed their full proportions.

3 - The Lenin dictum that after the imperialist war and the October Revolution, Marxism and revisionism could not live in the same organization, flowed from the new decisive stage of the class struggle. Thus whereas before 1914 within the selfsame parties there existed a Luxemburg, a Liebknecht, and a Bernstein; there existed, altho in different factions, of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party, a Lenin and a Plekhanov; etc. in a word, Marxists and opportunists revisionists--after August 4, 1914 and especially after November 7, 1917, their coexistence was unthinkable. Between these forces was an abyss of blood, the class barricades between the agents of imperialism, and the vanguard of the proletariat. Thus the first 4 Congresses of the Comintern marked the fundamental program (with the exception of the new concept of "Workers (non-proletarian dictatorship) Government" of the 4th Congress) for revolutionary Marxists of all countries in our epoch.

4 - The period between the first and second imperialist wars saw the need for a new reorganization of the Marxists. The Third International, based on the successful October Revolution and the first Workers State, fell prey to the political pressure of world

imperialism, under new historic circumstances. Whereas the Second became corrupted by the imperialist-crippled labor aristocracy and the vacillating petty bourgeoisie, the Third International succumbed primarily to the political pressure of world imperialism on the bureaucracy of the first workers state, and the Russian petty bourgeoisie. The erroneous, capitulatory tactics of the Marxists (pursued in the name of avoiding a split in the party because of the danger of imperialist intervention) played a decisive role in the loss of the 3rd International to the political agents of imperialism. The theory of "socialism in one country" raised in the Russian CP in 1924, found its fullest expression in the open liquidation of the sorry shadow of the International in 1943, in the midst of the second imperialist war. Social-Democracy and Stalinism competed in the carnage of 1939-45 for the honors of pitting class brother against class brother on the exploiters battlefield, after two decades of betrayals on the front of proletarian revolution.

5 - The struggle for a new international, the 4th Marxist International, found however new obstacles almost from its earliest inception. The forces who drew the proper conclusion from the theoretical betrayal of the 6th Congress of the CI (with the adoption of the Stalin-Bucharin program of socialism in one country) and the living betrayals of the German, English, Chinese, Spanish and other revolutions, and therefore called for a new international--found themselves isolated from the masses. Past sectarian errors and the new objective difficulties brought about a new revisionism in the case of tactics of building the new international--the infamous "French Turn" of Trotsky. Starting far to the left of the Comintern which at this time called for Peoples Frontism and Organic Unity of the 2nd and 3rd Internationals. Trotsky and his followers called for liquidation into Social-Democracy. Lenin's burning slogan for our epoch: break with the class betrayers, the reformists and their centrist shadows, unite the revolutionary Marxists, was again thrown into discard.

6 - The need for a new international, with parties politically and organizationally independent of the revisionists of all brands, found expression in a new split, the Left Wing of the (1935) Workers Party of the U.S. Thus the Revolutionary Workers League, U.S. was born, following the decisive defeat of the German workers by Hitler in 1933 and its effect on the Trotskyists. The RWL, US, altho born as a Left Wing Minority in a small American group, politically signified a new international tendency, of Marxism. Historically, it stood on the same plane as the Marxists who in 1914 called for the 3rd International, and those under Trotsky (before the 1934 Turn) calling for the 4th International.

7 - The practical revolutionary significance of the program and policies of the new split from the Trotskyists, was proven decisively in the Spanish Revolution. Except for an initial temporary error on the analysis of the POUM as Marxist (due to initial insufficient information), the fundamental line, strategy and tactics hammered out by the RWL on the class and political developments, proved correct. The open betrayal of Social-Democracy and Stalinism, the



vacillations and semi-concealed betrayal of the Trotskyists (despite the subjective good intention of their cadres in Spain who came in from outside), all confirmed the necessity and correctness of the split from Trotskyism and the establishment of the RWL, U.S.

8 - The objective conditions in which the Revolutionary Workers League was born, however, reveal the difficulties of the Marxists today. Despite the decay of capitalism, the crisis of 1929, the conditions in the workers' ranks as a result of the German and other defeats internationally, and the politically complicated situation of Social-Democracy, Stalinism, and centrist Trotskyism militated against a rapid growth of the new organization. The success of the Spanish Revolution could well have turned the tide. Its defeat and the approach of the second Imperialist War added to the RWL's difficulties.

9 - The smallness of the group from which the RWL sprung also increased its difficulties. Unlike the forces working for the 3rd International, and later the forces under Trotsky, the RWL did not arise out of a mass movement. The new organization had to confirm Marxism under exceptionally complicated circumstances (SP-CP-Trotskyist rivalry), recognize that it was not yet a party, and struggle against its sectarian heritage, and carryovers, without benefit of a strong, well-rounded leadership. Its basic capital was its program of revolutionary Marxism. Its cadres included some experienced elements, but for the most part comprised politically undeveloped but young and enthusiastic elements, of various political origin. Political homogeneity and cohesion had yet to be forged; the programmatic agreement, and the split from Trotskyism was but the starting point.

10. a. The League found itself in a great contradiction, which its cadres have yet to comprehend and overcome. Its Program was and is Marxist, anti-capitalist and pro-communist in orientation, standing politically on the basis of all previous proletarian history; but its given forces, the existing Marxian organization, are in the stage of a propaganda group with a mass orientation. Its aim is to develop into an organization of trained and experienced cadres, with influence over broad masses. The history of the revolutionary movement, and the works of Lenin, the great party organizer of our epoch, indicate that the workers' need is not for a "mass party", in which class consciousness of advanced elements is diluted and their work hampered by backward elements, but a party of the most advanced elements, who are tightly knit together and who have connections and influence over the broad masses. (Social-Democrats, Anarchists and other radical petty bourgeois state this is the cause of Stalinist bureaucracy, which justifies their age-old cry against proletarian democratic centralism; the brutal facts of our epoch disprove this and reveal the class treachery of these lies.)

b. The contradiction between the enormous class tasks of the Marxists, and the paucity of their forces and lack of sufficiently experienced cadres has given rise to the greatest confusion time after time in the history of the League. The League's action in the 1937 auto workers strikes, and in its small but politically significant intervention in the Spanish situation, showed its recognition of the tasks it faced; the reaction to the lack of concrete organizational results, in recruiting ability and in mass influence, which with the decline of the Spanish Revolution and the US strike wave gave birth to the 1937 Stamm split, showed the lack of political understanding of its objective situation.

c.1. An additional factor which weighed down on the RWL, U.S. was and is the historic contradiction of the American working class, between its technical advanced character and great proportion to the other classes in the US (the proletariat overwhelmingly dominates class relations) on one hand, and its political backwardness. While abroad the proletariat undertook revolutionary action in innumerable countries, in the US, the workers despite numerous gigantic strike waves since 1933, politically followed bourgeois reformism. The social-reformists (SP and CP, etc), with their centrist tail (Lovestone until 1940) Trotskyism,--although showing real development of class consciousness were and are yet secondary factors in the political scene when compared to Europe and Asia.

c.2. This national peculiarity of the American workers added to the political immaturity of the cadres of the RWL. Thus whereas the program and line developed by the League rested on the world experience of the workers, in action the forces of the League found the greatest difficulty in concretizing its program. The internal situation again and again saw battles between those who emphasized the need of holding to the basic program of Marxism above all, and those who emphasized the need of mass work above all. Lacking sufficient capable leading cadres, the problem of relating theory to practice repeatedly gave rise to errors.

c.3. The backwardness of the American workers also gave rise to repeated dispute in various forms on the relation to the American workers of the developments abroad. This reflected itself in the Fighting Worker, which at times gave more close analysis to foreign developments than to the US, and at other times dealt with US developments while neglecting serious analysis of important events abroad.

11 - The League's development was profoundly affected by the setbacks of the Spanish workers, with their later defeat in 1939, (climaxing the German, Austrian and other defeats) and the Munich development and the approach of the second imperialist war. As a small group, seeking to develop a structure of developed cadres, out of elements only recently from various political origins (CLA-WP, CP, SP, etc.), the above international developments increased the tension and resulted in the first serious splits, with the Stamm "Revolt" group, and the Eiffel-Mienov elements. The old, old contempt for

theory concept--and politically followed the centrists in the trade union and labor defense fields. The Eiffel-Mienov elements, ultra-lefts who confused the elements of imperialist conflict in the Spanish situation with the civil, class war, also expressed political defeatism. The Revolt group, the largest split off force, after a short existence liquidated in the early phase of the second imperialist war. Both the right wing Revolt group and the ultra-left Eiffel-Mienov forces, each in their own way, showed the terrific pressure under which the new organization had to fight for its existence as a Marxian organization.

12 - a. The period of the League's history, from its inception to the period of American Imperialism's direct entry into the second imperialist war, showed the correctness of the League's basic line in numerous actions in the class struggle in the U.S. Comparable to the Communist League of America in its stage of development (as a small propaganda group, its orientation toward the masses showed the possibilities of the Marxian line even for small forces. The unemployed work in Chicago in 1936, the open political participation in the UAW strikes in 1937, the Ohio "Red Probe" of 1938, the Cleveland relief crisis of 1939 and the Waller case of 1941 all showed enormous potentialities inherent in the League program and orientation. Each action had national significance and reached national and even international attention. However, all this activity which for its size marked creditable accomplishments on the League's record, left no real political and organizational results, either in extensions of political influence or worthwhile organizational gains.

b. The immaturity for the most part, of the League's forces, and numerous errors of the League's leadership, combined with the Stamm split flowing from the Spanish defeat and the pressure of the approaching imperialist war, washed out the effects of the excellent mass work of the organization before 1941. Thus instead of developing from a propaganda group with a mass orientation, into a cadre party with mass influence, the organization remained in its first stages. More, the unfavorable objective situation decimated the ranks and reduced the strength of the League far below its size and influence held at its birth as the Left Wing of the Workers Party (1935).

13. - The war period, like the Spanish Revolution, confirmed the fundamental correctness of the League line. Thus the two decisive tests of a revolutionary Marxian organization, war and revolution, were met. Against the social reformists and the centrists (with their semi-concealed formula of "turn the war into a war against fascism"), whose opportunism gave support and constituted wartime social-chauvinism, the League maintained its line of revolutionary defeatism, of uncompromising class struggle, under war conditions the cadres of the League in their various fields of activity, trade union, etc., concretized the League line (against the no-strike pledge, etc.). The press of the League, under the most difficult conditions, of bourgeois persecution, repeated banning, maintained the Marxian positions on the key questions of the day. Deficiencies were many, but given the lack of direct organization participation by various cadres due to their being in the grip of the military machine, given the lack of full time functionaries, given the inner subjective



tensions under bourgeois accentuated pressure, the League's history during the war marked it definitely as the only organization in the US with a full class struggle line.

14. - a. The closing phase of the second imperialist war and the immediate post-war period marked a new stage in the League's history. As after every great turn in history, the objective situation on a world scale and in class relation was one of great crisis. The turn from war-conditions to "peace" conditions required the greatest effort at readjustment which are still going on. The checking of the workers efforts to extend the October Revolution by confining it in warped form to the area under Stalinist and Red Army control (Eastern Europe) and where their agents held sway (China), and the new relations of the imperialists (with the US at their head) and the Soviet Union under Stalinism in the UNO constituted an enormous pressure on the world labor movement to the right. Thus where the first imperialist war ended with the October Revolution constituting a driving force to reorient and recrystallize the world labor movement to the left, the end of the second under the conditions indicated, thwarted a new large-scale leftward development. Instead, despite new proletarian upsurges and colonial revolutions, the dominant trend among the advanced workers the world over was to the right.

b. The survival of Stalinism at the helm of the first workers state was an enormous political blow against the Marxists (just as the failure of the imperialists to smash the Soviet Union during the war was an enormous blow to their class aims). Stalinism, product of the deadlock in world class relations between the first and the second imperialist war, profited by the revolutionary upheavals on one side, and the weakness of the Marxian forces on the other, to survive the war. This constituted not only a barrier to rapid development of a new Marxist international, but even more, a force for demoralization of various left forces tending toward Marxism. In relation to the International Contact Commission, of which the RWL, US, was the American section, the survival of Stalinism produced political confusion and drove sympathetic groups, such as the RKD (Revolutionary Communists of Germany), to ultra-leftism. Within the League, it produced the split of certain small but important elements to a particularly stupid form of ultra-leftism, which now saw the League as Left-Trotskyism, which in turn was only "left-Stalinism" by another name. These ultra-left tendencies within the ranks and the periphery of the Marxists forces, were only part of the general confusion over Stalinism's new position, among the workers and "radical" petty-bourgeoisie and intelligentsia the world over.

c. The victorious position of the American imperialists, whereby it emerged from the Second World Bloodbath as the strongest bourgeois power, politically, economically and militarily, reinforced the alien class pressure on the Marxists. The (relatively) prosperous position of the American workers as compared to the pre-war period--1937, -38, -39--and especially compared to the workers abroad, played a restraining hand on the revival of left political activities from the war time national-chauvinism, political hysteria and repression. Added to

workers' defeats abroad, the first successes of the imperialists and Stalinism in their efforts at establishment of the new status quo against the masses, the strong position of Wall Street abroad under revolutionary conditions, acts against the workers and the Marxists at home.

15. - a. The difficult situation of the American Marxists is reflected in their international tendency, the (Provisional) International Contact Commission. The ICC established on the very eve of the second imperialist war, was the first step towards recouping the Marxists' loss internationally as a result of the infamous French Turn of Trotsky. Whereas after the German workers' defeat of 1933, the utter worthlessness of the 2nd and 3rd Internationals became obvious to growing ranks of class conscious workers on a world scale, the increasing split tendencies in the old parties were stemmed and channelized back by Trotsky's call on them to reenter or remain in Social Democracy. This drove wide circles to reconcile themselves with the betrayers, reduced numerous other cadres to political tails with left phraseology, produced new centrist formations (the POUM, the most promising, which could not overcome the weaknesses of its centrist program), and drove others to apathy.

b. The development of the ICC was cut short by the wartime conditions before they could develop strong political homogeneous forces and organizational bases. While politically, the ICC 14 points rested on the historic break with Trotskyism the Marxists made in 1935, the new groups had just broken with Trotskyism on the eve of the war. The oldest section, the RWL, US, had just overcome the effects of a serious split (the Revolt group), and also was handicapped by its smallness and the growing war pressure. Thus the Nazi terror in Europe decimated the ranks, and the war conditions laid a heavy hand on the small weak forces of the Marxists and seriously impeded their progress.

c. The close of the war under conditions of a new imperialist-Stalinist block against the proletariat, struck a further blow against the ICC. Thus where the German affiliate of the ICC, the Red Front had yet to be heard from, the British group, the newly reorganized force of the Revolutionary Workers Association, split from the ICC over minor tactical errors of an incapable ICC representative. At the same time the war-aggravated crisis of world capitalism shook up the ranks of the old parties of the SP and CP, and produced left tendencies and here and there minor splits, against the dominant right tendency, and drive of the leaders closer to the bourgeoisie. This showed itself in (for the first time) public debates of Stalinism and Trotskyism in Greece and Italy; split groups in the CP in Holland and the US, etc. Within the new rapid growing Trotsky forces in Europe and US, political issues were raised which had split potentialities of great scale (the Morrow-Goldman split from Cannon to Shachtman, the differences of the International Secretariat with the French group over electoral policy and with the Spanish group over the constituent assembly, etc., etc.). However, the ICC, which should have been alive and reacted to these growing opportunities for a powerfully strengthened drive for a new International, instead ignored them and struggled over its own internal crisis, on a low political plane.

16 - a. The objective situation internationally, (despite the present temporary successes of the U.S. and other imperialists, and the Stalinist bureaucracy, against the oppressed masses) favors the emergence of a new Marxist Party and International. The crisis of world capitalism is shaking up all class and political alignments in the U.S. and abroad; the masses and their advanced sectors are seeking new leadership in their struggles. The giant strike wave and unprecedented soldiers demonstrations since the close of the war show this definitely, in the U.S., as do the new class upsurges in Europe and the colonies. The desperate maneuvers of the American bourgeoisie to achieve a stronger stabilization in Europe (former Axis satellite treaties, and now the proposed German treaty, etc.) and Asia, and their fears over the coming depression, to avoid upsetting the delicate balance so far reached on one hand, and their widespread use of the British Labor Party and other political agents in the workers' ranks, on the other, show that the key to the next period is the building of the Marxist Party. In all countries, the class is showing itself in its ferment, in its political revolt again and again against existing political forces, ready to follow the lead of the Marxists for a new Party. The building of a new strong Marxist Party in any country, may well go a long way toward preparing serious political regroupments in the workers' ranks on a world scale.

b. The postwar crisis of U.S. capitalism is preparing new and greater politicalization of the American Proletariat. The influence of Bourgeois reformism (New Dealism), which was so successful with the help of the social reformists (SP, CP) and the centrists (left Socialists, the former Lovestoneites, the Trotskyists) from 1933 to 1941, is now in great danger from the left. The death of Roosevelt, the victory of U.S. imperialism in the war, the new offensive of the bourgeois right, and the post war crisis all have put the bourgeois left to the wall. The recent formations such as Wallace's "Progressive Citizens of America" and "Americans for Democratic Action" show the crisis of the liberals. And the enormous strikes and soldiers demonstrations of nation shaking proportions show what is coming. The strong vote in the 1946 Congressional elections for the Trotskyists (considering their weakness compared to the old reformist forces) is a warning sign. When under the Ballot name Revolutionary Workers Party in Minnesota Trotskyism gets 11,000 votes, and 9,000 under its own name (with a former RWL member as a leading candidate), in addition to a sizable vote in a couple of other states, there is definitely indicated for the Marxists the need to analyze more closely, and act upon the real political development of the American working-class. Without exaggerating the significance of these events, the Marxists are duty bound to break with the present policy of tail-ending the workers, and begin to act as the real political vanguard of the class.

31 - The Revolutionary Workers League, U.S. and its international tendency, the (Provisional) International Contact Commission can in short order become the focus point for a serious recrystallization of the Marxists in the U.S. and abroad, providing its forces overcome their present political confusion and attain real clarity on the tasks and perspectives for the workers' vanguard in the coming period. Despite the dominant right trend in the political organizations of the workers on a world scale, there is a growing tendency (if as yet on a minor scale) of the left forces to regroup in a leftward direction. In Social-Democracy, in the Stalinist Parties-- in the U.S. as well



as abroad-- and the Trotskyists' forces, political ferment is definitely growing. It is the task and duty of the Marxists to assist these forces to break with the centrist and other misleaders, towards regroupment around the Program of the R.W.L. U.S. and 14 Points of the ICC. Just as in the present period, Social-Democracy, Stalinism and Trotskyism are repeating all their past historic errors again, but on a far greater scale, so the whole struggle of the R.W.L. and ICC since their birth can now assume full fruition on a scale far outpassing all their original expectations.

18 - The key to the overcoming of the crisis is political clarity on the objective situation, and the real situation, possibilities and limitations of the League as it is today. Action to be fruitful in a Marxian sense must recognize the axiom: program, theory, correct political line in strategic and tactical spheres is the key to real organizational growth today. The development of activity in all fields, the development of discipline, the development of democratic centralism rest on correct political theory. Lenin's dictum that the democratic centralism the workers need can only be based on correct theory, and that efforts for discipline on any other basis can only lead to "futile grimacing" and failure, was never more true than today. For the Marxists today, the question of a proper relation of theory and practice is the key to building the R.W.L. U.S. and the I.C.C., toward the new Marxist party and International.

19 - The present demands to the highest extent that the League analyze its history, its contributions, and its errors. Reaffirming its basic political program, it must correct the numerous political vacillations of the past period (on the Russian question, Palestine, lack of concrete position on numerous key questions of the day) by renewed struggle for political clarity. On the road to the party, the line laid down at its founding convention, in the League Program, in the ICC 14 Points, and numerous Conventions and Plenums must be reaffirmed and all recent vacillations toward "localism", economism, etc. be rejected. The perspective today must be one of reaffirming all basic positions to establish the League's forces as a strong propaganda group today, with the expectation of rapid growth into a party tomorrow. The contradiction between the present negative condition, and the fruition of 11 years efforts, may be overcome far sooner than expected, providing the Marxists do not surrender to rationalizations for inactivity on one hand, or get-rich-quick panic mongers on the other, but seriously work on realistic perspectives.

20 - The development of the Marxian organization from a propaganda group with a mass orientation to a cadre party with mass influence is not primarily a question of numbers. The problem is to develop the organization from a force that primarily carries on general propaganda and agitation, while carrying on some mass work, into one that can carry on concrete political work, of immediate strategic and tactical character. From a group that has very little roots in the mass, such a change produces real roots, real mass influence. From a group that has loose discipline and limited activity (primarily propagandistic), such a change produces a strong discipline and widespread activity among the broad masses (program and democratic centralism apply in first as well as later stages, only the reflection in their concrete forms change). From a force whose cadres in general

have elementary political and organizational development, the change produces tightly knit cadres of high development, capable of serious mass work. From a force of small, scattered cadres, the change produces comparatively large, cohesive cadres of vanguard forces of the class. All these aspects, obvious in their organizational aspects, are in content political, and require planned activity on a Marxian basis.

21 - The key political question today is the struggle for the Marxian Party, which expresses the class independence of the proletariat from the decadent imperialist bourgeoisie. In our epoch of decay capitalism, when the bourgeois state must more and more intervene to prop up the tottering old order of economy, the trend of increasing sections of "left" bourgeois and petty-bourgeois is to recognize "state control", and therefore become Laborite, Socialist, Stalinist and so on. The degenerated Workers State under Stalinist control adds to the confusion. The Marxists today, therefore, have a far more complicated and difficult situation than Lenin and the Bolsheviks to contend with, especially with the non-extension of the October Revolution in successful form to the decisive sectors of European and Asiatic economy, after the most widespread and destructive war in capitalist history. The Revolutionary Workers League, US, under these conditions has a gigantic task to overcome the political confusion resulting from these conditions, and for a truly Marxian Party. Basing itself on the lessons of the long struggle of the workers for the overthrow of capitalism, on the teachings of Marx, Engels and Lenin (and Trotsky when he was a Marxist) the Revolutionary Workers League, US, will draw the lessons of the past, including its own history, learn from its own errors by real revolutionary self-criticism, and lead the American workers towards a New Communist Party, American section of a New Communist (4th) International.





